

Energy and Technology Committee Members,

I am writing to provide testimony on and support for Proposed House Bill 5002, “An Act Concerning the Development of a Green New Deal. --- To create new programs concerning and to provide funding for energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainability and resiliency.”

First – I need to congratulate the state legislature for passing an important bill in June 2018 with a greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target 45% below 2001 levels by 2030. That is an admirable target, and now we need to get to work on achieving that goal. In order to reach that target the state needs to continue with individual bills and this Green New Deal to push that target into the planning for transportation and development statewide.

- **40% of our state’s GHG emissions are from the transportation sector, the largest contributing sector by far.** The CT Department of Transportation must incorporate the GHG reduction targets into their infrastructure planning and project prioritization. Building new highway lanes, bonding funds for expensive new state garages, and planning for increased highway capacity work against the GHG reduction goals. Highway projects, and increased highway traffic capacity, are both expensive and unsustainable. The future of our transportation must be centered on transit and rail, with transit-oriented development around those high quality systems and stations.
- **Regional Plans** - The state’s COG regions, our metropolitan planning organizations, must incorporate the state’s GHG reduction target into their Long-Range Transportation Plans (25-year plans) and Plans for Conservation and Development. This may require legislative language to require those plans to include greenhouse gas reduction targets with a path to reach those targets.
- **State Transportation Benefits** - To meet the GHG reduction targets, the state’s transportation benefits for employees must include a ‘parking buy out’ or alternate ‘transit pass benefit.’ With 51,000 employees, the largest employer in the state, this sets the example for transportation benefits across institutions and employers statewide. A transit pass benefit was specifically recommended in the Governor Lamont’s transportation transition team recommendation and could be modeled after the popular U-Pass program at state colleges and universities.
- **GHG Reduction Opportunity with Water Utility Projects** - The metro Hartford water utility, the Metropolitan District Commission, needs to incorporate green infrastructure projects with GHG reduction benefits into their \$2 billion 40-year plan to reduce contaminated stormwater runoff into the Connecticut River. Those green infrastructure projects will also create local jobs, improve urban air quality, and increase the resiliency of our state capital.
- **Support a Shift to Transit and Active Transportation** – Our small State of Connecticut has three cities in the top 26 in the US (pop > 100k) with high rates of zero-car households. For example, the City of Hartford’s zero-car household rate is greater than 30%. In seven Hartford neighborhoods the zero-car household rate tops 40%. With that rate, one would expect a world class transit system and connected bicycle lane network serving our state’s capital city and neighboring towns. Let’s make that expectation a reality!

- **Development** – Sustainable development and transportation are integrally linked. The State of CT cannot afford to continue developing open space, forests, and farm land into sprawling development. A Green New Deal (or separate bill) that puts an appropriate price on greenfield development that is outside transit-oriented development zones supports a future state that values sustainability over sprawl.

The Transport Hartford Academy put out a survey in the metro Hartford area on transportation related issues. This survey may be useful to you when considering the green new deal and a sustainable transportation system that best serves the future of Connecticut. In addition to reaching out to our email list, we sent this survey to transportation industry professionals, posted it to local town social media pages, and shared it through the MetroHartford Alliance.

- **Survey Results** - <https://centerlatino.wufoo.com/reports/2019-transport-hartford-legislative-priorities/>

Thank you for your attention to these important issues and your work on shaping Connecticut's Green New Deal.

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